Crazy Crust Pizza

by Kari Carlson           Yield: 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 tsp dried Italian seasoning
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp pepper
- 1/4 tsp dried Italian seasoning
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup Mozzarella cheese
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 (8 oz) can pizza sauce
- 1 cup prepared pizza sauce
- 1 (8 oz) can diced black olives
- 1/4 cup chopped pepperoni
- 1/4 cup chopped mushrooms

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, combine flour, Italian seasoning, salt, pepper, milk and eggs. Blend until smooth.
2. In large skillet, brown ground beef until thoroughly cooked; drain.
3. In a small bowl, combine flour, Italian seasoning, salt, pepper, milk and eggs. Blend until smooth.
4. In a small bowl, combine flour, Italian seasoning, salt, pepper, milk and eggs. Blend until smooth.
5. Bake for 25 minutes. Spoon beef over batter and top with onion.
6. Spoon cooking sauce over pizza and top with cheese.
7. Bake an additional 7 to 10 minutes.
8. Remove from oven and serve immediately.
Construction Projects

by David Talsma, Vice President Operations

Last fall’s breeze was one of the earliest that I can remember. We were frozen out of the fields the last week of November, and never returned for the remainder of the winter.

Due to the frozen ground, we were unable to tile this past fall and winter. We did, however, rework several waterways and clean up a couple of building sites. The first site was a nice acreage with a large barn and several outbuildings on it. The house was destroyed by an unexpected fire, and we decided not to rebuild it. A neighbor wanted the barn, so we gave it to him. He moved it a few miles down the road to his farm. He is real happy with it, and we are happy we didn’t have to destroy it. A few other neighbors moved the other buildings off to their properties. We demolished the burnt house. The other acreage we cleaned up was one that we recently acquired, adjacent to a current farm. It had a great big house on it, approximately 100 years old and was falling into a heap. The yard had never been trimmed and the buildings were in ruin. It was like a two acre jungle with three feet of junk thrown in it. We demolished and cleaned off the entire acreage. We plan on farming it this year.

This spring we hope to have time to make a few repairs that we didn’t have time to do last fall. Last spring, in parts of northern Jasper County, we had rain totals of 12-15 inches in two days. Needless to say some repairs have to be made on some conservation structures.

As I write this on the 10th of March, it doesn’t look like we will be able to do any construction work or field work until April. Most reports, from the locals who are doing sewer repairs from thawing water lines, are seeing 3-5’ of frost in the ground.

As we all know, things can change in a hurry.

Shop Projects

by David Talsma, Vice President Operations

The shop at I-80 Farms has been busy this winter. Our guys rebuilt a corn head, rebuilt a planter and serviced and replaced worn parts on the grain carts. The combines and chisel plows have been serviced and are ready for work this fall.

Around Christmas time, everyone took some time to travel a little or to spend time with family and friends. After the first of the year we have been busy hauling grain, loading seed beans for Pioneer and getting tractors and machines ready for spring.

Our guys worked a few days in the shop, building a bridge for the pond at my home. I constructed the pond five years ago and made a nice island for it, but never had access to it. With some engineering and head scratching, we ended up with a masterfully engineered and structured bridge 7’ wide and 65’ long. Once the bridge was constructed we put an axle under it and pulled it 10 miles down the road. We slid it across the ice and on to the island. It looks really nice. We should be able to cross the pond with a gator or a lawn mower. It gives Grandpa Talsma a new place to fish.

The guys have had a lot of other projects this winter. There is always a truck that needs to be serviced, worked on or tires replaced. They are always busy repairing or engineering something to make a machine or tool perform better.

Supplies for this spring are starting to arrive. It looks like it’s going to be one of those springs where everything is going to happen at once, but we’ll get it done!
Biodiesel, Conservation and Ethanol Facts

**Biodiesel Facts**
- Biodiesel is a clean-burning, biodegradable, alternative fuel produced from vegetable oils or animal fats. To be called biodiesel, it must meet American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM D-6751) quality specifications.
- Blends of biodiesel can range from one percent to 99 percent. Common blends used in Iowa are B2, B5, B10 and B20. Many farmers use even higher blend levels in their on-farm equipment.
- Biodiesel is the most energy efficient alternative fuel produced today with an energy balance of 5.5:1.
- Biodiesel provides engine lubricity which helps extend engine life and reduce maintenance costs. Even biodiesel levels as low as 1 percent can provide up to a 65 percent increase in lubricity.
- B100 reduces ozone (smog) formation by 50%.
- Biodiesel is a biodegradable, renewable fuel with positive performance benefits. Increased cetane, high fuel lubricity and increased oxygen content make it a preferred blending agent for ultra-clean diesel.
- As a domestically-produced fuel, biodiesel can reduce the need for fossil fuel and improve the nation’s energy security.
- Biodiesel is registered as a fuel and fuel additive with the EPA and meets clean diesel standards established by the California Air Resources Board (CARB). B100 (100 percent biodiesel) has been designated as an alternative fuel by the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Transportation.
- Biodiesel blended up to 20 percent (B20) exhibits cold flow properties similar to #2 diesel and can be used year-round.
- Biodiesel has the highest BTU content of any alternative fuel (ranging between #1 and #2 diesel fuel).
- B100 reduces exhaust emissions of carbon monoxide by 48 percent and hydrocarbons by 67 percent. Sulfur emissions are essentially eliminated with B100.
- A voluntary accreditation program has been established for biodiesel producers and marketers to ensure the highest quality standards are being met. BQ 9000 is a program that ensures biodiesel quality and integrity.
- The long-term savings in reduced wear, repairs, and maintenance and lost down time make biodiesel the best choice for America’s trucking industry.
- Used cooking oil from restaurants and other sources of cooking oil can be used to produce biodiesel. This alone replaces half a million barrels of imported crude oil a year. Previously, cooking oil was just dumped down the drain.
- Biodiesel’s Impact on Commodity Prices
  - Nearly 72 percent of all biodiesel produced in Iowa in 2012 was produced from soybean oil. This demand for soybean oil benefits Iowa’s farmers by raising the price of soybeans by more than 8 percent, and increasing the price of corn by more than 5 percent. For an Iowa farmer with 400 acres each of corn and soybeans, this would equate to a more than 9 percent increase in net profits.
  - The increased demand in soybean oil also reduces the cost of some feed ingredients, benefiting Iowa’s livestock producers. Due to the biodiesel industry, soybean meal costs are reduced by more than 13 percent and distillers grains costs are reduced by 5 percent.
  - Biodiesel production boosts the net income for an Iowa farmer with finishing cattle by nearly $16 per head.
  - The biodiesel industry also decreases production costs for hogs while increasing revenue. As a result, the net income for Iowa’s hog producers is improved by more than $4 per head.
  - “The bottom line is that biodiesel has a net positive impact on finishing hogs and cattle in Iowa.”
- **Biodiesel Boosts Revenue for Iowa’s Crop and Livestock Farmers Even Further**
  - When crop and livestock productions are combined, the benefits are even greater for Iowa farmers. Taking into account both production costs and revenue:
    - An Iowa farmer raising crops and cattle would see nearly a 17 percent increase in net income.
    - An Iowa farmer raising crops and hogs would see almost a 20 percent increase in net income.

**Conservation Facts**
- Since 1987, Iowa’s erosion rate is down 33 percent, meaning less soil, nitrogen and phosphorous are reaching Iowa waterways, according to the USDA National Resources Inventory.
- Iowa has more than 597,000 acres enrolled in Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and represents almost 13 percent of total acres in the CREP program.
- A recent study from the Center for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD) at Iowa State University (ISU), estimates that Iowans invest about $345 million annually in conservation practices.
- Iowa farmers have voluntarily restored more than 250,000 acres of wetlands.
- Since 2004, voluntary watershed practices now collectively reduce sediment reaching Iowa’s waters by 130,947 tons per year and reduce phosphorous by 202,312 pounds per year.

**Ethanol Facts**

**Environmental**
- Global ethanol production and use is estimated to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by 100 million metric tons in 2012, according to energy experts. This is equivalent to taking 20.2 million vehicles off the road.
- According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, each gallon of corn ethanol today delivers as much as 230% more energy than is used to produce it.
- Ethanol production requires less water than gasoline; by a 3 to 1 margin.
- With 13.3 billion gallons of domestic ethanol production, the U.S. required 476 million fewer barrels of imported oil in 2013.
- The U.S. imports approximately 35% of its petroleum needs today. This number is down significantly since the rise of the ethanol industry.

**Iowa Economy**
- Iowa leads the nation in ethanol production, creating nearly 30% of all ethanol.
- The ethanol industry supports around 55,000 jobs in Iowa and accounts for $5 billion of Iowa’s GDP.
- Iowa’s ethanol industry can produce more than 3.8 billion gallons annually, using more than 1.3 billion bushels of corn.
- A modern dry-mill ethanol refinery produces approximately 2.8 gallons of ethanol and 17.5 pounds of highly valuable feed co-products (distillers’ grains) from one bushel of corn.
- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has approved E15 for 2001 and newer cars and trucks. E15 is one of the most tested fuel blends in history.